

SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS

Page 8, line 26 to page 9, line 20:

Figure 4 also shows an alternative distal plug according to the invention which may be used in combination with any of the embodiments previously described. With such an inventive plug, it is first seated distally at an appropriate distance within the intermedullary canal, and includes a plurality of deformable upwardly oriented leaf springs 490. Accordingly, with the plug 480 installed in place as shown, an even more generalized type of implant, and not requiring an actual, solid connection to such a distal spacer, may be inserted down and into the medullary canal and held in place while resisting distal side-to-side motion as the distal tip of the implant is retained within these leaf springs 490. This also allows adjustments in a longitudinal direction enabling fine tuning at the effective length of the implant. Note in Figure 4 that the aperture through which the implant is inserted is ~~quite a bit larger than that shown in Figure 4 and, in fact,~~ does not include a seal per se. This is due to the fact that, in accordance with this embodiment, cement may, in fact, be injected prior to or after the implant is held in place both proximally and distally. Indeed, according to this particular embodiment, a standard distal plug may be used in conjunction with the mechanism shown generally at 404 even without a cap or collar as shown. For example, this mechanism 404 may simply attach to an existing bone surface or structure instead of the point 409, thereby holding the implant in place proximally and distally while preventing motion in all dimensions as the cement cures, regardless of when it was injected. In accordance with an alternative methodology, the proximal and distal stabilizers may be used in conjunction with a trial then, upon achieving a desired orientation, a single manual fastener may be loosened, and the actual implant installed in the exact configuration of the trial to guarantee proper positioning.